

Herald Answered.

(Continued from First Page.)

believe that life imprisonment is the greater punishment and the trend of progressive thought is to substitute it for the death penalty.

Taking all the facts together as they exist now, pro and con, if they raise an honest doubt as to his guilt the man's sentence ought to be commuted.

Because the Herald will be sure to publish it I notice here that the Tampa Tribune says that when the public is about forgetting that I am Cooper's lawyer I get myself interviewed. The Herald and Tribune have had flings innumerable at Cooper and some at me and always erroneous and vindictive and I have never published a line about the case except twice in the nature of REPLY to correct some particularly devilishly inhuman thrust and now I can't even say a few words to my local home editor giving Cooper's side, as I understand it, without having these two scintillating and sparkling examples of "free speech" and the Fourth Estate jump on me with a torrent of misrepresentation and abuse, and seek to prejudice my cause with falsehoods about me.

It would be just as much to the point and a good deal nearer the truth for me to say that these two reckless newspapers are trying to draw a little respectability and fame to themselves by goading me into a public controversy with them.

Every imputation against me in the Herald is false and every argument the Herald has ever urged in this case is senile and aside from what the Pardoning Board is trying to discover.

Very truly,

J. W. BRADY.

Bartow, Fla., 25, '06.

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ADDITIONAL LOCALS.

N. A. Faulkner and Jno. H. Treadwell, prominent citizens of Arcadia, have been to Tampa this week.

The Owl Club met with Mr. and Mrs. Geo. R. Parker last Friday night in their elegant home on Oak street.

Mr. Nelson, representing the Ballard Medicine Co., was in Arcadia this week, attending to business for his firm.

The press and public speaks well of the John H. Sparks show, which exhibits here Thursday, February 15.

Mrs. Solon Evans and children, of Live Oak, arrived Monday and are visiting her parents and relatives in this county.

The Fortnightly Literary Club to meet with Miss Fannie Bunker this week is postponed from Friday to Saturday night of this week.

F. B. Smith, of West Roxbury, Mass. is spending some weeks in DeSoto county looking after his fine orange grove west of Arcadia.

The Ladies' Musical Club of Arcadia, has been invited to join the State Federation of Clubs, that has its own club house in Jacksonville.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith, of Goldsboro, N. C., have arrived in Arcadia and are visiting their son, Dr. Kirby Smith and other relatives in Arcadia.

Mrs. H. E. Carlton left for Sanford last Friday. She will while away visit in Hawthorne, Gainesville and Ocala and will be away a few weeks.

The great Werntz Family, eight in number, and one of the leading features with Sparks' Shows, do the most wonderful aerial act ever witnessed.

Jos. H. Brown, our efficient and courteous county superintendent of public instruction, hunted THE CHAMPION office before breakfast this morning. He thinks we are too far out.

Christmas Greens

A Christmas Story
By Martha McCulloch-Williams

Copyright, 1904, by Martha McCulloch-Williams

"Christmas without greens! Impossible! There surely must be some of a sort in this big farming world," Leona said almost tragically.

Her cousin and host, Amos Baker, shook his head.

"None nearer than Sinking Fork," he said. "That's twelve miles off and the chances against finding anything even there—the hills are so low and the valley hardly worth the name."

"You must take me to the head waters. I know I shall find what I want there," Leona said imperiously. "Get out the wagonette at once! No matter if Christmas is ten days off, I know a way to keep greens fresh."

"Won't you say please?" Amos asked banteringly as he went toward the door. Leona ran after him with the prettiest face of contrition.

"Of course I will and 'thanky, sir,' and anything else in the world you ask," she said, laying her hand on his arm.

He smiled at her. "Suppose I should ask you to say 'Yes' to Norrie Cordon. I've a great mind to do it—If Norrie is my brother-in-law, he's worth a dozen of that other fellow."

"H-m. You are sure there is another fellow?" Leona queried saucily, but with a pretty flush.

Amos looked supernaturally wise. "There must be," he said. "Candy three times a week and flowers and gimcracks till the carrier wishes rural free delivery had never been thought of—those are signs I've never yet known to fail."

"You should not peek. It's ungentlemanly, even in your private mail box," Leona said severely, pursing her lips.

Amos shook his head at her. "You shouldn't flirt," he said, "but today I'm bound to give you a chance. Norrie will go with you on this fern chase, because I'm bound to go somewhere else."

"How nice! Norrie is never saucy," Leona said, with a dimpling smile. It made her so enchanting that Norrie, just then coming through the door, lost his heart over again for at least the twentieth time. The losing gave him a fearful joy. He too, had read and interpreted the signs of the post, but as he climbed into the wagonette and sent the horses away at a snapping pace he put all thought of this unknown rival from him, resolved to enjoy at least one blissful day basking in the sunshine of Leona's smiles.

Presently the way bent at almost a right angle. Norrie reined in there and said, letting his free hand rest over Leona's clasped ones: "The fork is just ahead, but you'll find nothing there. I know. I hunt around it every fall. I wonder if you dare go down in the hills with me? There you can get loads of things—green cedar, cross vine, ferns and big green briars with leaves like wax. I know of a holly bush, too, and a clump of pines."

"Why aren't you taking me to them?" Leona interrupted, her eyes dancing.

Norrie smiled back at her, but there was an anxious undertone in his voice as he answered, "Because they're a long way off, not too far for the horses, but so far we'd be in the night getting home."

"As if that mattered," Leona said scornfully, "when you know my heart is set on giving those dear babies such a Christmas as they never saw. Your sister Amy says I may do just what I please. I please to have a Christmas tree, with the whole house trimmed to match. Drive on—like the wind. Sancho and Sally will have a long rest while you are helping me back and hew."

"Just as you say, ma'am," Norrie answered suspiciously meek. "But if I haul the tree home, to say nothing of cutting it down, I'm to have my choice of whatever is on it or under it. Is that a bargain?"

"It has to be, but I never thought you'd be such an extortioner," Leona said loftily, although her eyes twinkled. Then she fell silent, drinking in the joy of the sunshine, of the rapid whirl through the soft December day.

The landscape grew more barren, more broken; the fields were smaller, the farmhouses meaner and less thrifty. By and by the road ran down a steep ridge, only to climb an opposite one steeper still. The sun had begun to sink. Norrie looked up at it apprehensively, then sent the blacks faster. A mile farther on he stopped and sprang out, saying as he lifted Leona to her feet, "You'll want your supper before you get it, I reckon, but here we are."

Leona cried out in raptures. Before her stood a clump of pines. On beyond down the rocky slope lay matted armfuls of long, lacy fronds. The green briars also were in evidence. She caught up Amos' pruning shears and began to cut things right and left. She was so intent that she did not see Norrie slip away, but very shortly she

looked up to see him dragging in a fine young holly full of scarlet berries. "The kids never saw anything like it," he said as he hoisted it into the wagonette and made it fast there. Then he fell to work, wrenching up ferns in armfuls and tearing down mats of briar. Leona looked at him with something of awe. He was so slight and light on his feet, she had never credited him with the thews and sinews of manhood. Insensibly she contrasted him with the other fellow, the city fellow, who could and would give her millions—millions which had almost

tempted her to accept the man, albeit she knew she did not love him truly. If she had asked him to set his hand to hard things for her pleasure she could fancy his look of amazed disgust.

Still she could not whistle him down the wind. She was proud, ambitious, luxury loving, not the least bit suited to be a farmer's wife. And Norrie Gordon loved his land and his vocation too well ever to be anything but a farmer. With a sigh, she told herself she should no doubt end by taking Ennis Loring. Suppose he should accept her casual invitation and come down to Longly, the Baker place, for the holidays? How bare and cramped the life would appear to him—a life wherein the circus made the event of the year and going to church on Sundays was as much a diversion as a duty.

Something of all this floated nebulously through Leona's mind as she watched Norrie at his joyous obedience.

"The best branches are over on that far side," he said, flinging off his coat and scuffling out of his shoes. "We'll take just half a dozen. The tree won't miss 'em. I'd hate to leave it ragged. Somehow this clump seems to belong to me. I found it first when I was little more than a boy."

Almost before she knew it he stood among the branches, breaking and cutting slender stems. Leona ran to pick them up as they fell. "Stand back!" he called to her, at the same time reaching for an especially tempting bough. The wood of it was tough. It bent where he thought to break it, and, instead of snapping, it crushed into stringy fibers. Norrie had the impulse of mastery even over inanimate things. Forgetful that he was twenty-five feet in air, he gave the bough a jerk so energetic it made him lose his balance and come crashing earthward. But there were boughs lower down, and somehow he clutched one with his right arm, swung himself up to it and clambered back to the trunk. Coming down this, Leona saw him hitch himself along in a way wholly unlike his ascent. She did not know the reason until he stood by the wagonette, saying almost apologetically: "I reckon you'd better drive on the way home. My left arm hit that big limb when I fell and put itself out of business."

Longly farm at Christmastide made the neighbors stare. Amy had insisted upon a party. It would never, never do to waste all Leona had brought to pass simply upon the family. Greens were everywhere—over doors and windows, in nooks and corners and up and down the broad stairway. The tree, too, was a vision with tapers gleaming through its coral wealth and all manner of tinsel ornaments sparkling amid its green leafage. The tinsel had come from the city. So had the other fellow.

Leona had been panic stricken at the outset. Now a sunny peace possessed her spirit. Since she had seen Norrie tottering against the evening sky—falling, it might be, to his death for his lady's whim—she had begun to question her own heart more closely than ever before. What answer had rewarded the questionings she did not tell. But Ennis Loring had found her more softly, more subtly fascinating than ever and was ready for her sake to keep terms with all the rural world. It amused him, of course, that the tree bore such wondrous fruitage. Trees were not Christmas commonplace roundabout Longly, so all the people thereabout had sent their gifts to be piled at the tree's foot and thence distributed. After they were distributed there would be supper, then the dance. Norrie would have to be a looker on. His broken arm was not yet out of the sling.

Amos ought to have been Santa Claus, but had flatly refused. So Leona herself, made up into a startling Christmas fairy, with a black half mask and a pair of realistic wings, apportioned properly the Christmas tree's fruit, saying things that fitted most cases beautifully and so doubled the value of the presents. Nobody had been forgotten. Ennis Loring stood hugging a huge tin horn. Norrie's sound arm was fairly heaped with jingling parcels, topped with a toy automobile. Then the fairy lifted from the litter of moss and greenery at the tree's foot a huge pair of spectacles and clapped them upon her own eyes. "I am looking for—the person I belong to," she said clearly. Everybody held breath as she walked up to her two lovers, who by some chance stood side by side. For a breath she studied their faces intently, a beautiful flush showing below her half mask; then, with a little laughing cry she laid her hand upon Norrie's, saying very low, "This is what you get for finding me these Christmas greens."

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